



ANS Guidance for Paper Session Chairs and Organizers

Purpose of this Guidance

Session chairs and session organizers play an integral role in the development of technical content at ANS's national meetings and therefore the overall technical quality of the meeting. These summary guidelines are provided to assist paper session chairs and organizers.

ANS is committed to hosting meetings that advance knowledge and understanding. In doing so, we aim to include diverse voices and to ensure that our events are inclusive. All attendees are valued equally for their skills and abilities and each person is respected similarly for their unique perspectives and experiences. Please consider this as you put your best self forward in organizing and conducting paper sessions.

What is a Paper Session?

A paper session is when multiple papers – generally 3-5 – are clustered for presentation in one session. The presentation is an opportunity for an author to present the technical material in his/her paper. The topics of papers in a session should be related. The session organizer can arrange the order of papers so that the topic flows or builds optimally. Whenever possible, the session organizer should avoid scheduling multiple presentations in one session by the same presenter.

Paper Session versus Panel

A technical paper session can be a regular contributed session where authors submit papers following the call for papers, or an invited paper session, where authors are officially invited by a signed letter from a session chair to submit a paper. Any paper not officially invited or a paper "stimulated" by a session organizer is a contributed paper. These paper sessions should contain no less than three papers and usually no more than five depending on the time available according to the program. Authors are then asked to present for up to fifteen minutes followed by five minutes for questions and answers. For the Annual and Winter Meetings, authors who present in a paper session are required to submit a summary to be published in the *Transactions of the American Nuclear Society* publication following the meeting.

Panel sessions should bring together leading experts on the topic to interact freely with one another and the audience to exchange information and ideas. Usually, panels cover topics that are more recent or are the subject of current news, material that is more rooted in policy than technical details, or technical material that is not ripe for published papers but nevertheless important to discuss. Panel sessions should not turn into paper sessions without the papers. Informal settings with less-scripted discussions led by a moderator or facilitator are more interesting and allow more opportunities for audience participation and interaction.



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Types of Papers

Contribute or stimulated

- Any paper not officially invited, but stimulated instead.
- Stimulated papers are informally solicited by a session organizer but are officially recognized as contributed by ANS.
- Normally, organizers identify colleagues to submit a paper on the topic in question by an informal email or phone call.

Invited

- A paper whose author was invited by letter from the Chair of a Professional Division or Technical Group.
- This type of paper is normally considered only for plenary sessions or special sessions.
- A formal letter signed by a representative of ANS is sent to the author.

Types of Paper Session

Regular contributed session

- Authors contribute papers because they are inspired by the Call for Papers or have been encouraged by the session organizer.
- No papers are officially "invited" but a session organizer may send his own letter to an author to stimulate participation.

Invited and contributed session

- These sessions are comprised of invited papers and contributed papers.
- One or more formally invited papers can be selected by the division program committee

All invited

- Comprised of only invited papers on a selected topic.
- Summaries are required and reviewed by the division reviewers.
- Invited papers are subject to accept/reject actions.

Paper/panel

- Usually includes one or two paper submissions for review.
- Papers are usually related to the topic of the panel.
- Paper authors can also participate on panel.
- Session organizer invites other panelists to participate (follow panel guidelines).



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Prior to the conference

Topic Submission Timeline

- Topics must be submitted and approved (outlined below) by divisions prior to submission of the topics for the Call for Papers.
- Topic submission to ANS by Division Program Chair should include the title, session organizer/chair, sponsoring Division(s), and 100-word summary.
 - For the June meeting, submit topic by the previous July.
 - For the November meeting, submit topic by the previous January.

How is a Paper Session Approved?

- At the meeting one year prior, an ANS member may suggest topics for a paper session to the division program committee.
- The division then reviews suggested topics and works with the Division Program Chair to decide which sessions to submit for the Call for Papers.
- Once the topic is approved within the division, the session organizer should begin to plan for the session and stimulate papers.
- After papers are received and reviewed, a decision is made to retain or delete a session. The original line-up of sessions in the Call for Papers/EPSR may be modified, based on the actual papers that have been submitted. If there are too many papers for a session, a second, similar session may be added (e.g., Thermal Hydraulics: General--II), depending on space availability. The session must be finalized for inclusion in the program by the time of the Room Scheduling Meeting.



Speaker Registration Fees

All presenters are required to pay for their meeting registration. Communicate early to authors that they will be required to register for the conference (either full or one-day registration fee). ANS staff will assist with the communication to the speakers through the submission system.

Each Division is allotted 5 one-day comps or one full comp for presenters. Session Chairs needs to receive permission from their Division Chair with further instructions for the speaker registration. One attendees who have been formally approved via signed invitation letter may qualify for a complimentary registration.

Session Chair Responsibilities: Slide Presentations and Biographies

- In the weeks leading up the conference, collect the speakers' slide presentations (though slides are not a requirement, it is very rare for a presentation to occur without slides) and biographies that will be used to introduce speakers.
- Review final slide presentations received from all speakers so that you become familiar with the upcoming presentations.
- Prepare at least one question for each presentation to help kick off the question-and-answer (Q/A) segment or to fill in if attendees do not ask many questions.
- Ask the speakers how they would like to be introduced, noting their academic or professional credentials and relevant titles.





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At the conference

Registration Desk

- Check in with the registration desk to ensure that your presenters are registered and have arrived by the day of the panel.
- If you do not know the speakers personally, you are encouraged to engage with them at the conference before the session. This will help with introductions and alleviate the last-minute activity right before the session begins.

During Your Session

- Session chair welcomes participants, provides ground rules for the session, presents a brief overview of the session topic, and introduces each presenter in order of their presentations.
- Avoid introducing representatives of some groups (e.g., women, students, or younger members, etc.) more informally than others because this can undermine their professional credibility.
- Each person gives their presentation.
- Session Chair facilitates Q/As. Usually, 5 minutes per presentation is the allotted time for Q/A.
 - Treat all those asking questions with the same degree of formality and respect.
 - Try to ensure that a variety of people get to ask questions, especially when time is limited during the Q/A and the chair needs to prioritize who will be given a chance to speak. For example, ensure the person who may be less vocal but has had their hand raised gets an opportunity to ask their question.
 - Be aware that implicit bias can influence your reaction to questions.
 - Try to engage substantively with all questions asked and avoid dismissing questions or perspectives.
- Session Chair concludes session by thanking the presenters and the audience.



Following the conference

- Direct requests for slides to the ANS Meetings department. meetings@ans.org
- Have the speakers sign a release form that you will provide to ANS staff if you plan to distribute presentations directly.

